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(Article begins on next page)

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Ockham and Chatton on Intellectual Intuition *

The purpose of this paper is to discuss the arguments Chatton gives for rejecting Ockham's admission of intellectual intuition. These arguments are often assessed in the literature as mere criticism of Ockham.¹ This is an unsurprising perspective. But Chatton's arguments may also be considered in their own right as offering some philosophically interesting reasons for dismissing this kind of knowledge. We shall examine these reasons by focusing on the debate between Chatton and Ockham on the first thing known by the intellect. We shall see that Chatton's criticism brings to light two significant shortcomings of Ockham's theory of knowledge. They concern two relations that are involved in Ockham's account of intellectual intuition: (a) first, the relation between sensory intuition and intellectual intuition, and (b) second, the relation between the intellectual intuition of a thing and the cognition of its species, its "species cognition".² Chatton calls into question both relations. In this respect, Chatton's point is

* I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the anonymous reviewers for their insightful remarks and useful suggestions. Special thanks go to Jenny Pelletier for revising my English. It goes without saying that I am responsible for any mistake or misinterpretation.

¹ For a comprehensive reconstruction of the debate between Chatton and Ockham on intuitive cognition, see S. Schierbaum, 'Chatton's Critique of Ockham's Conception of Intuitive Cognition', in *A Companion to Responses to Ockham*, ed. C. Rode (Leiden-Boston, 2016), 15-46.

² Ockham introduces the distinction between intuitive and abstractive cognition and between two kinds of intuition (sensory and intellectual) in the Prologue to the commentary on the *Sentences*, book I. On this distinction, see E. Karger, 'Ockham's Misunderstood Theory of Intuitive and Abstractive Cognition', in *The Cambridge Companion to Ockham*, ed. P. V. Spade (Cambridge, 1999), 204-226. For the sake of clarity, in what follows by speaking of 'sensory intuition' and 'intellectual intuition' I shall take them as shorthand, respectively, for what Ockham and Chatton call 'sensory intuitive cognition' (*notitia intuitiva sensitiva*) and 'intellectual intuitive cognition' (*notitia intuitiva intellectiva*). Note that in this paper my concern will be limited to the case of the intuition of extramental things in the natural process of knowledge. I shall not discuss intuition in the case of reflexive knowledge. For an examination of this case, see Schierbaum, 'Chatton's Critique', 33 ff.; S. Brower-Toland, 'Medieval Approaches to Consciousness: Ockham and Chatton', *Philosopher's Imprint* 12/17 (2012), 1-29; L. Deni Gamboa

that there is no room for intellectual intuition in the process of natural knowledge of the external world. In order to explain the intellectual cognition and recognition of an extramental thing, it suffices to make the species cognition of a thing and the sense perception of it interact with each other.

My discussion in what follows divides into three parts. In the first, I shall recall Ockham's position on intellectual intuition, while in the second part, I shall consider in turn Chatton's criticism of both relations, (a) and (b). In the third part, I shall discuss some theoretical implications of Chatton's arguments, before concluding by summarizing the differences between Ockham and Chatton on intuition. The purpose of this comparison is not to establish if, in general, Chatton's conception of intuition is theoretically more viable than Ockham's for accounting for our intellectual knowledge of extramental things. In the end, both conceptions seem equally debatable and we should not be urged to choose between them. The noteworthy aspect is only that Chatton picks up on two points of real weakness of Ockham's account of intellectual intuition and in what follows I shall examine these points.

1. Ockham on the First Thing Known by the Intellect

In the light of the paramount importance Ockham attributes to intuition, many scholars portray him as an advocate of externalism in cognition.³ For Ockham, neither

Lopez, *William of Ockham and Walter Chatton on Self-Knowledge*, PhD Dissertation, Université du Québec à Montréal, Montreal 2016. Note also that in this paper I shall leave in the background the evolution of Ockham on the nature of concepts. It is not important for my argument. Ockham defends intellectual intuition in each of his two theories of concepts, although Chatton especially criticizes the account Ockham gives in his first theory. On Ockham's theory of concepts and its evolution, see C. Panaccio, *Ockham on Concepts* (Aldershot, 2004); also M. McCord Adams, *William Ockham* (Notre Dame, 1987), 495-629.

³ The externalist interpretation of Ockham is debated in literature. For arguments in favor, see especially Panaccio, *Ockham on Concepts*, and C. Panaccio, 'Intuition and Causality: Ockham's Externalism Revisited', *Quaestio* 10 (2010), 241-253. Against the externalist interpretation of Ockham, see for example S. Brower-Toland, 'Intuition, Externalism, and Direct Reference in Ockham', *History of Philosophical Quarterly* 24 (2007), 317-336, and S. Brower-Toland, 'Causation and Mental Content:

the materiality nor the singularity of an extramental thing is an obstacle for our intellect to enter in direct contact with it.⁴ In particular, when our natural knowledge obtains under perfect conditions, a singular extramental thing directly acts on our human soul and stimulates it to elicit, at one time, three singular and numerically distinct acts of cognition: an act of sensory intuition, an act of intellectual intuition and an act of species cognition. Ockham calls the first two “apprehensive” acts of cognition, while the third one “abstractive”, and claims that these acts are necessary presuppositions for our acts of judgment to obtain.⁵ Ockham thinks that intellectual intuition must be admitted because abstractive cognition necessarily requires it and also because the entire intellectual process, from the beginning to the end, must develop in the intellectual part of the human soul.

The externalist interpretation of Ockham seems justified precisely by two facts: (i) first, by the fact that each extramental singular is said by Ockham to *cause* directly two numerically distinct and singular acts of intuition – sensory and intellectual – at one time, and (ii) second, by the fact that an act of intellectual intuition is said to refer to the extramental singular thing that caused it and to that thing only. In his first *Quodlibet*, for example, Ockham clarifies this aspect noting that an act of intellectual intuition may be called “proper to a singular thing” not because it more “assimilates” to the thing intuited than to another, but because it is a sign directly and immediately referring to the

Against the Externalist Reading of Ockham’, in *The Language of Thought in Late Medieval Philosophy. Essays in Honor of Claude Panaccio*, eds. J. Pelletier – M. Roques (Berlin, 2017), 59-80. For a defense of a more nuanced externalist interpretation of Ockham, see P. Choi, ‘Ockham’s Weak Externalism’, *The British Journal of Philosophy* 24/6 (2016), 1075-1096.

⁴ See e.g. Ockham, *Ordinatio* I, d. 3, q. 6, eds. G. Gál – S. Brown, in *Opera Theologica* II (St. Bonaventure, N.Y., 1967), 492, 15 – 494, 13 [henceforth *OTh*]; *Quaestiones in librum secundum Sententiarum (Reportatio)*, qq. 12-13, eds. G. Gál – R. Wood, in *OTh* V (St. Bonaventure, N.Y., 1981), 284, 2 – 286, 5.

⁵ In Ockham’s theory of knowledge, there are two types of abstractive cognition: (i) that which abstracts from the presence and/or existence of a singular while still concerning the singular and (ii) that which abstracts from its singularity as well. Here the second type is concerned. For this distinction, see *Ord.* I, prol., q. 1, eds. G. Gál – S. Brown, in *OTh* I (St. Bonaventure, N.Y., 1967), 30-31.

extramental singular thing that caused it and to that thing only.⁶ Here Ockham is replying to Chatton’s objection that intellective intuition cannot be called “proper to a singular thing” since it equally represents one singular thing and any other singular thing that is in maximally similar (*simillimum*) to it.⁷ Ockham thinks Chatton is wrong: the case of *simillima* only permits concluding that the cognition proper to a singular thing cannot be abstractive cognition;⁸ but this case does not apply to intellective intuition. An act of abstractive cognition, in fact, cannot be called “proper to a singular thing”, since it assimilates to more than one singular thing; but an act of intellective intuition can be called “proper to a singular thing”, although – Ockham explains – not because it assimilates to one singular thing in particular, but because it is causally determined by the singular thing that is intuited. This argument seems to have two implications. The first is that acts of intellective intuition fulfill nothing but a referential

⁶ See *Quodlibeta* I, q. 13, ed. J. C. Wey, in *OTh* IX (St. Bonaventure, N.Y., 1980), 76, 89-98: “Ad primum istorum dico quod intuitiva est propria cognitio singularis, non propter maiorem assimilationem uni quam alteri, sed quia naturaliter ab uno et non ab altero causatur, nec potest ab altero causari. Si dicis, potest causari a Deo: verum est, sed semper nata est talis visio causari ab uno obiecto creato et non ab alio; et si causetur naturaliter, causatur ab uno et non ab alio, nec potest [ab altero] causari. Unde propter similitudinem non plus dicitur intuitiva propria cognitio singularis quam abstractiva prima, sed solum propter causalitatem, nec alia causa potest assignari.”. See also *Ord.*, prol., q. 1, *OTh* I, 38, 5-9; d. 3, q. 6, *OTh* II, 506, 20-22; *Ord.* I, d. 3, q. 2, *OTh* II, 403, 5-16; 410, 10-14; d. 3, q. 6, *OTh* II, 489, 17-20; d. 2, q. 8, 270, 6-13; d. 2, q. 9, 307, 13 – 308, 8; *Quaestiones in libros Physicorum*, q. 7, ed. S. Brown, in *Opera Philosophica* VI (St. Bonaventure, N.Y., 1984), 410, 3-5; 411, 12-16; and 412, 44-46 [henceforth *OPh*]. Our possibility of intuitively cognizing things is only in principle in most cases. In fact, Ockham acknowledges that many impediments and various interferring factors can make intuition imperfect or obscure. On this see *Ord.*, prol., q. 1, *OTh* I, 33, 2-12.

⁷ See *Quodlibeta* I, q. 13, *OTh* IX, 74, 61-66: “Sed hic sunt aliqua dubia: primum est, quia videtur quod cognitio intuitiva non sit propria, quia quaecumque intuitiva detur, aequaliter assimilatur uni singulari sicut alteri simillimo et aequaliter repraesentat unum sicut alterum; igitur non plus videtur esse cognitio unius quam alterius.” Chatton raises this doubt in *Reportatio*, d. 3, q. 5, a. 1. Two things are maximally similar when they are similar in such a way that it could be difficult for us to distinguish them. Two coins or two homozygote twins could provide a good example of maximally similar things.

⁸ See *Quodlibeta* I, q. 13, *OTh* IX, 74, 57-60: “Secundum assumptum patet, quia nulla cognitio abstractiva simplex est plus similitudo unius rei singularis quam alterius sibi simillimae, nec causatur a re nec nata est causari; igitur nulla talis est propria singulari sed quaelibet est universalis.”

function for Ockham. They do not pick out any real feature shared by the singulars that are maximally similar, for otherwise they could not refer to any singular in particular. The second implication is that acts of intellectual intuition are not representative in character. This may be said because acts of intellectual intuition are not called proper to a singular thing on account of a likeness (*similitudo*). In fact, if they did represent the singulars that caused them in some way, we could know that the singulars we are sensing are not the same if they were replaced with other singulars maximally similar. But since we cannot know this, then they cannot be said to represent the singulars that caused them. Nonetheless, Ockham could concede that one and the same act of intellectual intuition may be, by itself, repeatable for all the singulars that are maximally similar.⁹

The causal relation between extramental thing and intellectual intuition also has other implications. One significant implication is that intellectual intuition could not persist if the thing that caused it ceased to exist or be present. At least, this holds for the natural course of events, when intellectual intuition always arises with sensory intuition. As Ockham says in the Prologue to the *Ordinatio*, if the sensory intuition were destroyed, the intellectual intuition would disappear as well.¹⁰ And if the sensory

⁹ Even the non-representative nature of the acts of intellectual intuition is a contested issue in literature. There are in fact texts where Ockham characterizes such acts as likenesses of things (see, e.g., *Qq. in II Sent.*, qq. 12-13, *OTh V*, 287, 16ff.; but see also, for a more doubtful claim, 273, 23ff.). For discussion, see, e.g., Panaccio, *Ockham on Concepts*, 119-143; Brower-Toland, 'Intuition, Externalism'; C. Panaccio, 'Concepts as Similitudes in William of Ockham's Nominalism', in *Proceedings of the Society for Medieval Logic and Metaphysics*, 4: *Mental Representation*, eds. G. Klima – A. W. Hall (Newcastle upon Tyne, 2011), 25-31; S. Schierbaum, 'Questioning ... Claude Panaccio', *Bochumer Philosophisches Jahrbuch für Antike und Mittelalter* 16 (2013), 266-281; S. Schierbaum, *Ockham's Assumption of Mental Speech. Thinking in a World of Particulars* (Leiden, 2014), 162 ff. For my argument, it does not matter to take a stance in this debate; it is important only to see that Chatton thinks that Ockham should concede that the acts of intellectual intuition are representative in character, precisely in the light of the case of *simillima*.

¹⁰ See e.g. *Ord. I*, prolog., q. 1, *OTh I*, 27, 10-18; 27-28, 19-26: "Si dicatur quod notitia intuitiva intellectiva non destruitur ad cessationem alicuius sensationis exterioris, et ita per consequens posset aliqua veritas contingens esse evidenter nota de aliquo sensibili sine sensatione illius sensibilis, dico quod sicut non est inconueniens ad aliquam transmutationem corporalem, puta infirmitatem vel somnum, cessare omnem actum intellectus, ita non est inconueniens ad cessationem alicuius sensationis sensus exterioris cessare

intuition were not yet produced, no intellectual intuition would be generated either.¹¹ The same holds for the relation between the intellectual intuition of a thing and the species cognition of it. When our natural knowledge obtains under perfect conditions, it is impossible for us to have an intellectual intuition of a thing without having at the same time species cognition of the thing intuited.¹² This is so because, as Ockham

notitiam intuitivam intellectivam eiusdem.”; *Quaestiones in librum quartum Sententiarum (Reportatio)*, q. 14, eds. R. Wood – G. Gál – R. Green, in *OTh VII* (St. Bonaventure, N.Y., 1984), 278, 20 – 279, 2: “notitia intuitiva intellectiva in anima nostra praesupponit notitiam intuitivam sensitivam, igitur ubi deficit notitia sensitiva, et intellectiva.” As is well-known, Ockham thinks that we can have an intellectual intuition of a thing even if the thing is not (or no longer) existent or present, but that this can only happen extraordinarily. Even in this case however, Ockham assumes that the link between the act of intellectual intuition and the thing that naturally caused that act must be preserved. See e.g. *Ord.*, prol., q. 1, *OTh I*, 38, 15 – 39, 16. Here I shall not dwell on the case of the intuition of non-existents. For a recent reconsideration of it, see C. Panaccio – D. Piché, ‘Ockham’s Reliabilism and the Intuition of Non-Existents’, in *Rethinking the History of Skepticism. The Missing Medieval Background*, ed. H. Lagerlund (Leiden-Boston, 2010), 97-118, and F. Amerini, ‘Guglielmo di Ockham, l’onnipotenza divina e l’intuizione del non-esistente’, in *Quaderni di Noctua, 5: Tra antichità e modernità. Studi di storia della filosofia medievale e rinascimentale*, eds. F. Amerini, S. Fellina, A. Strazzoni, E-theca On Line OpenAccess Edizioni (2019), 812-877 (URL=<http://www.didaschein.net/ojs/index.php/QuadernidiNoctua/issue/view/24/showToc>; last access on 30 April 2021). I refer to these studies for further literature on the topic.

¹¹ See e.g. *Ord.* I, prol., q. 1, *OTh I*, 27, 10-16: “Per hoc patet ad omnes auctoritates quod tales veritates contingentes non possunt sciri de istis sensibilibus nisi quando sunt sub sensu, quia notitia intuitiva intellectiva istorum sensibilium pro statu isto non potest haberi sine notitia intuitiva sensitiva eorum. Et ideo sensitiva non superfluit, quamvis sola notitia intuitiva intellectiva sufficeret, si esset possibile eam esse naturaliter pro statu isto sine notitia intuitiva sensitiva.”

¹² See, e.g., *Quod.* I, q. 13, *OTh IX*, 74, 49-51: “Primum patet, quia non habetur cognitio propria simplex de aliquo singulari pro tempore pro quo non potest haberi cognitio eius specifica.” The clause (‘under perfect conditions’) is necessary. As a matter of fact, in the quodlibetal question Ockham resorts to the rejection of such a clause to prove that a species cognition cannot be proposed as the cognition proper to a singular thing. Consider the case of a thing that is far away from the subject-cognizer; in this case, the cognition of being (or of a genus) and not that of the species is what is first associated to intellectual intuition. In this case, no species cognition is present at the beginning, so this kind of cognition cannot be proposed as that which is, in every case, proper to a singular thing (*Quod.* I, q. 13, *OTh IX*, 74, 51-56). Ockham’s argument seems to imply two things. First, that the species cognition may be associated with an act of intellectual intuition only when our natural knowledge obtains in perfect conditions. Second, that

explains in the *Questions on the Physics*, the acts of intellectual intuition and species cognition are caused both primarily and simultaneously by the extramental singular.¹³

This confidence in the existence of intellectual intuition rests on a fundamental conviction by Ockham, namely that through sensation and intellection we cognize the same thing (*idem*) and under the same aspect (*sub eadem ratione*).¹⁴ As Ockham often emphasizes, what is cognized by the inferior faculty of the human soul is cognized by the superior faculty and in exactly the same way. We may state this because the sensory process and the intellectual process are essentially ordered processes, the former to the latter, and if the sensory soul but not the intellectual soul grasped the extramental singular, the intellectual process would be less perfect than the sensory process, which cannot be maintained.¹⁵ However, there is an order in the process of knowledge acquisition. The extramental thing is the entire cause of an act of sensory intuition; the extramental thing and sensory intuition are, individually, partial causes and, conjointly, the entire cause of an act of intellectual intuition; and the extramental thing and intellectual intuition are, individually, partial causes and, conjointly, the entire cause of an act of abstractive cognition. Intuitive and abstractive acts of intellectual cognition in turn are, as said, necessary presuppositions for the acts of judgment to obtain.¹⁶

an intellectual intuition is in any case associated with an abstractive cognition (be it that of being, of a genus or of a species). Natural knowledge obtaining in perfect conditions is required, however, to have perfect intellectual intuition. On this, see e.g. *Qq. in II Sent.*, qq. 12-13, *OTh V*, 258, 13-19.

¹³ See *Qq. in Phys.*, q. 7, *OPh VI*, 411, 31-33: “Et si quaeras a quibus causatur intellectio talis, respondeo: cognitio propria singularis et cognitio specifica aequae intuitive et aequae primo causantur simul ab obiecto.” See also *Quod. I*, q. 13, *OTh IX*, 77-78, 135-148.

¹⁴ See, e.g., *Ord. I*, d. 3, q. 6, *OTh II*, 494, 19-23: “Tertio dico quod notitia singularis sensibilis est simpliciter prima pro statu isto, ita quod illud idem singulare quod primo sentitur a sensu idem et sub eadem ratione primo intelligitur intuitive ab intellectu, nisi sit aliquod impedimentum, quia de ratione potentialium ordinatarum est quod quidquid – et sub eadem ratione – potest potentia inferior potest et superior.” Note that, for Ockham, the ‘under the same aspect’-clause concerns the object-cognized and not the subject-cognizer. See also *Ord.*, prol., q. 1, *OTh I*, 36, 15 – 37, 1; 64, 31 – 65, 4.

¹⁵ See, e.g., *Qq. in II Sent.*, qq. 12-13, *OTh V*, 284, 7-16.

¹⁶ See *Ord. I*, prol., q. 1, *OTh I*, 22, 4ff.; 70, 21ff.; *I*, d. 3, q. 6, *OTh II*, 494, 19-22; *Quod. I*, q. 15, *OTh IX*, 86, 68ff.

Summarizing what has been said thus far, Ockham seems to hold that the cognitive process must respect three conditions: (1) first, both sensation and intellection must concern one and the same thing; (2) second, such a thing must be cognized under the same aspect; (3) third, a causal order must hold between the acts of cognition. Let me call them, respectively, the Identity Condition, Modal Condition, and Order Condition. These conditions are interwoven. Especially, a rejection of (2) entails a rejection of (1). Ockham clarifies this entailment in *Ordinatio* I, d. 3, q. 5, when he discusses the question “whether the universal is the first thing known by us”. Ockham boils down his position in five conclusions, but for our purposes, it is especially the first conclusion that should retain our attention. In it Ockham establishes that the singular, and not what is expressed through the most universal concept (i.e., being), is the first thing cognized by us according to a temporal order. The reason given there is that the object of cognition always precedes the act of cognition and only the singular can precede an act of intuitive cognition.¹⁷

Here Ockham is directly polemicizing with John Duns Scotus. Ockham thinks that the Doctor Subtilis should concede this conclusion too, given that he accepts the Identity Condition and claims that the singular is what is first cognized through sensation. Ockham acknowledges that Scotus could try to avoid this conclusion by assuming that it is the singular *qua* singular that is first cognized through sensation, while the singular *qua* member of a species is what is first cognized through intellection. Ockham however objects that in this case, the Modal Condition would not be respected, and therefore neither would the Identity Condition. If a thing is not cognized under exactly the same aspect through sensation and intellection, it is simply not one and the same thing that is cognized. This would imply that we have sensation and intellection of two different things, and this cannot be said. For the same reason, nor could Scotus say that the first thing we intellectually cognize is the species of the singular, because we cannot say that the species is what is first sensed; but the Identity Condition prescribes that one and the same thing is what acts upon the intellect and the senses. Since Ockham thinks he has sufficiently proved that whatever exists in the outer world is singular, it follows that only singulars can act upon our senses. Nor, finally,

¹⁷ Cf. *Ord.* I, d. 3, q. 5, *OTH* II, 473, 6 – 474, 18, esp. 473, 6-9.

could Scotus say that the species is cognized though sensation and intellection differently, since this would again violate the Modal Condition.¹⁸ In brief: there is no way of avoiding the conclusion that the singular is the first thing known by us according to a temporal order.

2. Chatton's Reaction to Ockham

Ockham's criticism of Scotus as well as his emphasis on intuition and singularity provoked many reactions, both in Oxford and Paris, including that of Chatton.¹⁹ Chatton displays the same critical attitude towards Ockham that Ockham had towards Scotus. In particular, he charges Ockham with having addressed the topic of the first thing known by the intellect by redefining the initial terms of the question, and that this produced a certain confusion.²⁰ Chatton elaborates many arguments for rejecting Ockham's first conclusion of *Ordinatio* I, d. 3, q. 5, viz., that the singular, and not what is expressed

¹⁸ See *Ord.* I, d. 3, q. 5, *OTH* II, 454, 1 – 455, 23.

¹⁹ For an introduction to Chatton's theory of cognition and his criticism of Ockham, see E. Karger, 'William of Ockham, Walter Chatton and Adam Wodeham on the Objects of Knowledge and Belief', in *Vivarium* 33/2 (1995), 171-196; R. Keele, *Ockham Explained: From Razor to Rebellion* (Chicago and La Salle, 2010), esp. 145ff.; S. Brower-Toland, 'How Chatton Changed Ockham's Mind: William Ockham and Walter Chatton on Objects and Acts of Judgment', in *Intentionality, Cognition and Mental Representation in Medieval Philosophy*, ed. G. Klima (Fordham, N.Y., 2015), 204-234.

²⁰ For example, in the *Reportatio* Chatton complains that Ockham calls 'vision' the intellectual intuition of a thing, and this sounds like a very unusual way of speaking. See *Rep.*, prol., q. 2, a. 3, ed. J. C. Wey (Toronto, 1989), 98, 5-16; also *Rep.* I, d. 3, q. 5, a. 3, eds. J. C. Wey – G. J. Etzkorn (Toronto, 2002), 314-316, nn. 107-108: "Quare isti ponunt quinque conclusiones. Prima est quod prima intellectio est propria rei singularis. Hoc improbatum est in primo articulo et alias improbabitur. Nec tamen ponam me ad probandum significata vocabulorum, huc usque enim homines vocaverunt visionem quam experimur in oculo sensationem et non intellectionem. Vocando ergo illos actus quos non experiar esse in potestate mea sensationes et non intellectiones, quoniam non est in potestate mea apertis palpebris non videre, tunc inquirendae sunt difficultates reales, alias quomodo poterit homo disputare? Si enim omnino velis vocare visionem ocularem intellectionem, non possum impedire." For other complaints, see *Rep.* I, d. 3, q. 5, a. 3, ed. Wey-Etzkorn, 314, nn. 103-104; also *Lectura* q. 7, a. 3, ed. Wey-Etzkorn, 255-256, n. 87; 256, n. 90; 258, n. 98.

through the most universal concept (i.e., being), is the first thing cognized by us according to a temporal order.²¹ Metaphysical considerations concerning the nature of the soul and its faculties play a key role in his arguments.²² Considerations concerning the order of cognitions are also relevant for the purpose. As has been said, Ockham assumes that there must be a causal order in the process of natural knowledge (Order Condition) and that the entire intellectual process, from the beginning to the end, must develop in the intellectual part of the human soul. Accordingly, Ockham argues that intellectual intuition is needed because sensory intuition cannot be accomplished by the intellect (for otherwise every sensation would be an intellection), but the formation of mental propositions and judgments requires the formation of simple terms, and this latter is possible only through intuition.²³

Chatton finds Ockham's considerations unjustified. Specifically, he elaborates five main arguments for rejecting Ockham's doctrine of intellectual intuition. Let me call them (1) the Unicity of Subject Argument, (2) the Experience Argument, (3) the Causality Argument, (4) the Clarity Argument, (5) the Sensory/Intellectual Distinction Argument.²⁴ They all are intended to reject Ockham's first conclusion that the singular is the first thing sensed and intellected by us according to a temporal order. All five arguments have the same goal: to prove the *non-necessity* of intellectual intuition or the *sufficiency* of sensory intuition for linking abstractive cognition to the extramental thing. As a premise, Chatton thinks that it is not necessary to posit the identity of the *object* of cognition (which Ockham justified by the Identity Condition and the Modal Condition) in order to safeguard the continuity of the process of cognition from

²¹ Chatton extensively argues against Ockham's criticism in *Lect.* I, d. 3, q. 7, a. 3, ed. Wey-Etzkorn, 239ff. But see also *Rep.* I, d. 3, q. 5, ed. Wey-Etzkorn, 291ff.

²² On this, see Schierbaum, 'Chatton's Critique', 16-17.

²³ See *Ord.* I, prol., q. 1, *OTh* I, 17, 15-17, and 21, 6-8; 22, 4-6. See also *Quod.* II, q. 10, *OTh* IX, 158, 42-53. For other arguments on the necessity of intellectual intuition beyond sensory intuition, see *Ord.* I, prol., q. 1, *OTh* I, 25, 15-17 and ff.

²⁴ They are clearly formulated in *Rep.* I, d. 3, q. 5, a. 1, ed. Wey-Etzkorn, 294-295, nn. 18-20, and already in prol., q. 2, a. 4, ed. Wey, 108-112, 83-203; they are reiterated in *Lect.* I, d. 3, q. 6, a. 1, ed. Wey-Etzkorn, 217-220, nn. 12-21.

sensation to intellection; it suffices that the *subject* that senses and intellects be one and the same. In order to appreciate Chatton's arguments, one must bear in mind this shift: Chatton redefines the Identity Condition, moving it from the object-cognized to the subject-cognizer; at the same time, he rejects the Modal Condition and qualifies the Order Condition. In fact, Chatton returns to the celebrated Aristotelian *dictum* that "intellection is about universals, sensation about singulars". In what follows, I shall discuss especially the first three arguments (1-3), which are important for clarifying the way in which Chatton rethinks the two relations, (a) and (b), which we mentioned at the beginning of this paper – namely, (a) the relation between sensory intuition and intellectual intuition, and (b) the relation between the intellectual intuition of a thing and the species cognition of it.

Chatton most extendedly formulates his arguments in *Lectura* I, d. 3, q. 6, a. 1, when discussing the question "whether our first cognition in this life is the proper cognition of the singular". In that article, he makes it clear that the Aristotelian *dictum* that "intellection is about universals, sensation about singulars" does not entail that sensation is less perfect than intellection, or vice versa, as Ockham had worried about, although the acts of the sensitive soul may be said to be less noble in some sense than those of the intellectual soul. Nor even does it entail that sensation and intellection concern different objects, but only that the 'under the same aspect'-clause of the Modal Condition does not hold: one and the same object may be cognized according to different aspects by one and the same subject.²⁵ The rejection of the Modal Condition does not affect the continuity of the process of cognition, since continuity can easily be preserved by assuming that the human soul is the ultimate subject of both sensations and intellections. Chatton explains that this assumption does not force us to reduce sensations to intellections or to attribute sensations directly to the intellect. The difference between these acts remains, and amounts to this: sensations occur with sense-organ modifications and are received in the sensory soul, while intellections are received in the intellectual soul and occur without sense-organ modifications. But on the other hand, Chatton is convinced that if sensations exclusively pertained to sense organs and the sensory soul, and the intellect's power were not extended over sensations at all,

²⁵ See, e.g., *Lect.* I, d. 3, q. 6, a. 1, ed. Wey-Etzkorn, 222-223, n. 29; 224, n. 36; 225, n. 39.

then the intellective process would be entirely disconnected from the sensory process. For this reason, the subject of both sensations and intellections needs to be posited as one and the same (Unicity of Subject Argument).

Chatton's argument as formulated in the *Lectura* is in fact more sophisticated than what I have reconstructed above. Chatton appears uninterested in committing himself to one definite position about the nature of the intellective soul and its relationship with the sensory soul. His point is that the Unicity of Subject Argument follows regardless of whether one takes the intellective soul as really identical with the sensory soul or really distinct from it. In both cases, the sensory soul and the intellective soul bring about the human soul, which may be taken as one in number; so, although sensation configures itself as a different faculty of one human soul, it is nonetheless a sufficient cause for the intellective soul to have cognition of the extramental singular. To be clearer, if one endorsed the doctrine of the unicity of human soul and assumed that the two souls are really identical, one would more easily get the point because in this case it is evident that one and the same is the subject of both sensations and intellections. If one instead – as Chatton finally does – holds to the doctrine of the plurality of souls in the human being and assumes that the two souls are really distinct, one gets the point too. In order to reach the goal, it suffices to posit that sensation and intellection are processes not distinguished locally (*loco*) or according to the subject (*subiecto*),²⁶ but essentially ordered in that they are activated by powers of one human soul which are the first in function of the second.²⁷ Thus, regardless of whether one takes the intellective soul as really identical with the sensory soul or really distinct from it, Chatton argues that there is no need to admit intellective intuition in order to link the intellect to the extramental singular. Sensory intuition is enough to produce certitude about the thing we are

²⁶ See *Lect.* I, d. 3, q. 6, a. 1, ed. Wey-Etzkorn, 217-218, n. 13: “Probo assumptum, quia anima [*fortasse pro potentia*] intellectiva et potentia sensitiva, si distinguerentur, non distarent loco vel subiecto, et essent potentiae ordinatae”.

²⁷ See *Lect.* I, d. 3, q. 6, a. 1, ed. Wey-Etzkorn, 223-224, nn. 33-34; 225, n. 40. In accordance with Kilwardby's condemnations, Chatton endorses the same view as Ockham, namely that in the generation of human beings there is a succession of three really different souls. On how to reconcile this view with the Unicity of Subject Argument, see also *Rep.*, prol., q. 2, a. 4, ed. Wey, 105-106, 14-52; 114, 261-288; q. 3, a. 6, 113, 233 – 115, 313.

sensing, since there is coordination between the two powers and such a coordination confers unity on the human soul. From this argument, Chatton concludes that the first intellectual cognition of a thing, according to a temporal order, is not the intellectual intuition of it.²⁸

In the text of the *Lectura* we are examining, Chatton resumes the two principal *pro* and *contra* arguments for the view that the extramental singular is the first thing known by the intellect according to a temporal order, as follows. For the *pro* position: that which is primarily cognized is what primarily moves the intellect to its cognition; but this can be only the singular *qua* singular since only singulars exist in the external world. For the *contra* position: our cognition naturally progresses from the more to the less confused, as shown by the Aristotelian example of babies who initially call every man father and every woman mother, and only later correctly discriminate their parents; but the more confused is the universal and not the singular.²⁹ It is in the first article of the question, while confronting these *pro* and *contra* arguments, that we find Chatton formulating his most incisive criticism of Ockham. He begins with recalling Ockham's three conditions that regulate the process of cognition and with reaffirming what he already said in the Prologue to the *Reportatio*.³⁰ He then addresses two critiques that concern the two relations, (a) and (b), mentioned at the beginning of this paper – namely, (a) the relation between sensory intuition and intellectual intuition, and (b) the relation between the intellectual intuition of a thing and the species cognition of it. These critiques reinforce what Chatton has concluded through the Unicity of Subject Argument, that is, the superfluity of intellectual intuition. In particular, these critiques prove that this kind of cognition is not only unnecessary, but also empirically unverifiable. Let me consider Chatton's two criticisms in turn.

²⁸ See *Lect.* I, d. 3, q. 6, a. 1, ed. Wey-Etzkorn, 217, n. 12: "Aliter dico ad istum articulum, sicut dictum est, quaestione secunda Prologi, quod prima intellectio primitate originis non est cognitio propria alicuius singularis sensibilis extra, maxime non est intuitiva". Against Peter Auriol, Chatton also denies that the first cognition of the singular is a singular abstractive cognition. See *Lect.* I, d. 3, q. 6, a. 1, ed. Wey-Etzkorn, 220, n. 22; 223, nn. 31-32; 229, n. 55.

²⁹ *Lect.* I, d. 3, q. 6, a. 1, ed. Wey-Etzkorn, 215, nn. 1-2.

³⁰ *Lect.* I, d. 3, q. 6, a. 1, ed. Wey-Etzkorn, 216-217, nn. 3-11.

2.1. Chatton's First Criticism: Intellective Intuition Cannot Be Distinguished from Sensory Intuition

In his first criticism, Chatton contests the possibility of setting intellective intuition apart from sensory intuition. He does it by two claims: (i) first, in the natural course of events, intellective intuition always arises together with sensory intuition and (ii) second, whatever can be explained by means of intellective intuition (such as the clarity of cognition or the evident assent)³¹, can also be explained by means of sensory intuition. As Sonja Schierbaum has noted, in the *Reportatio* Chatton attributes great importance to Ockham's appeal to experience,³² so he too takes experience as the testing ground for refuting Ockham's defense of intellective intuition.³³ The upshot of this way of thinking is thus the Experience Argument. It is formulated in the context of the first conclusion of the article, namely that intellective intuition cannot be accounted for as a sort of *vision* of an extramental singular.

Experience Argument – According to Ockham, in the natural course of events, intellective intuition always arises together with sensory intuition. Now, we could not experience any act of intuition whatsoever without some modification of the sense organs. But when we have an act of intellective intuition, we cannot point to any bodily modification, namely, to any bodily modification other than those caused by sensory

³¹ See *Lect.* I, d. 3, q. 6, a. 1, ed. Wey-Etzkorn, 218-219, nn. 15-16. See also *Rep.*, prol., q. 2, a. 4, ed. Wey, 111, 176-182; 112, 204-211: "Videtur igitur dicendum quod anima in via non habet naturaliter aliquam intellectionem intuitivam [sensibilium], quia sensationes exteriores sibi sufficiunt ad causandum quemcumque assensum rebus significates per propositiones contingentes." For a clear formulation of Chatton's argument on the clarity of cognition, see *Rep.* I, d. 3, q. 5, a. 1, ed. Wey-Etzkorn, 294, n. 19. See also below, note n. 42.

³² See Schierbaum, 'Chatton's Critique', 26ff.

³³ See *Rep.* I, d. 3, q. 5, a. 1, ed. Wey-Etzkorn, 293, n. 17: "Ista conclusio est probabilis et dico quod nec haec nec opposita habent evidentiam nisi recurrendo ad experientiam, et ideo utraque vellet habere experientiam pro medio."

intuition. Therefore, in the natural course of events, we cannot distinguish intellectual intuition from sensory intuition.³⁴

It is clear that Chatton's argument is simply an application of the principle of parsimony to an epistemic case, i.e., that of intellectual intuition: if no empirical evidence can be given for distinguishing two things A and B that are supposed to occur together, then the less empirically evident thing can be reduced to the more evident one. However, despite the welcome simplification the Experience Argument wants to introduce, Chatton's argument rests on a presupposition that could be at first questionable. In fact, someone could contest that every act of intuition involves a bodily modification. This modification is indisputable in the case of sensory intuition. When I see a tree, for example, my eye no doubt receives some stimulation from the tree (precisely, my eye perceives the color of the tree) and so it gets modified. Ockham could deny, though, that a bodily modification occurs in the case of intellectual intuition too, since no act pertaining to the intellectual part of the human soul is accomplished by sense organs. But Chatton seems to think that Ockham too, in reality, endorses that presupposition, at least if one takes seriously his characterization of intellectual intuition as *vision*. If intellectual intuition were really understood as a sort of sensory vision, it would include acts of imagination and sensation, and so one could easily prove that it cannot be distinguished from sensory intuition. On the other hand, if it were understood as a non-sensory vision, one would have no empirical evidence to prove that intellectual intuition occurs when sensory intuition occurs, since one does not experience any distinct and proper bodily modification for intellectual intuition, either in the external sense organs or in the internal senses. Returning to our example, when I have an act of sensory intuition of the tree that is in front of me, a modification occurs in my eye. But I cannot prove that I also have an act of intellectual intuition of the tree, since I do not experience any supplementary bodily modification, that is, any bodily modification other than that occurring in my eye when I see a tree.

³⁴ See *Lect.* I, d. 3, q. 6, a. 1, ed. Wey-Etzkorn, 219, nn. 16ff. See also *Rep.*, prol., q. 2, a. 3, ed. Wey, 102, 107-130; a. 4, 108, 98-111; d. 3, q. 5, ed. Wey-Etzkorn, 294-295, n. 20. Modifications of sense organs are required in every case, even when we imagine non-existent things. See *Rep.*, prol., q. 2, a. 4, ed. Wey, 115-117, 300-350.

Ockham could reject this argument by insisting that the difference between sensory intuition and intellective intuition is simply that in the first case a bodily modification occurs while in the second case not. Chatton thinks that even this reply is unsatisfactory. In fact, whenever an act of cognition occurs in absence of a bodily modification, such an act is of the abstractive-kind.³⁵ Although Chatton's counter-reply could appear as begging the question in that it simply presupposes that no act of cognition occurring in the absence of a bodily modification can be of the intuitive-kind, Chatton's general strategy may sound convincing. I can experience any act of intuition whatsoever only along with a bodily modification; but since no bodily modification can be associated with intellective intuition and only with it, I cannot experience any act of intellective intuition apart from that of sensory intuition. So, the fate of intellective intuition is sealed: it reduces either to sensory intuition if it is taken to involve some bodily modification, or to abstractive cognition if it is taken to involve no bodily modification.

Chatton reinforces this first argument with a second argument, the Causality Argument. It is the possibility of indicating a proper cause of intellective intuition that is now called into question.

Causality Argument – Like every cognition, intellective intuition too must be caused by something. Either is it caused entirely by sensory intuition or entirely by something else. If not by sensory intuition, then either entirely by the extramental thing or by the intellect itself. In both of these last cases, the intellect would not need any sensory intuition to have intellective intuition. This conclusion, however, not only conflicts with common experience, since I never experience myself having an intellective intuition alone, but Ockham himself rejects it, at least if it refers to the natural course of events. As we have seen, there are texts where Ockham agrees that in the natural course of events every act of intellective intuition arises together with an act of sensory intuition. The only remaining option is that intellective intuition is entirely caused by sensory intuition, and this allows one to reduce the former to the latter. Nor does it change that one says that sensory intuition is not the entire cause, but only a

³⁵ See *Lect.* I, d. 3, q. 6, a. 1, ed. Wey-Etzkorn, 219, nn. 16-17; *Rep.*, prol., q. 2, a. 4, ed. Wey, 109, 112-133; also 115, 289-299.

partial cause of intellectual intuition (the other partial cause is the extramental thing itself). Since the extramental thing is the cause of both sensory intuition and intellectual intuition (entirely, in the first case, and partially, in the second), it cannot be the *proper* cause of intellectual intuition. Again, it remains that the proper cause of intellectual intuition can be only sensory intuition, and this takes us back to the first case.³⁶

Chatton, however, is not content with proving that intellectual intuition entirely reduces to sensory intuition, but he also tries to prove that sensory intuition *cannot* cause intellectual intuition. Interestingly, Chatton applies what Ockham says about the relation between sensory intuition and acts of judgment to the case of the relation between sensory intuition and intellectual intuition. According to Ockham, sensory intuition cannot be the immediate and proximate cause, entirely or partially, of an act of judgment. The reason given by Ockham is that an act of judgment pertains to the intellectual part of the human soul and sensory intuition cannot act upon the intellect.³⁷ It is for this reason that Ockham introduces intellectual intuition as the starting-point of the intellectual process. Well, Chatton argues, if one follows Ockham's reasoning, one may conclude that sensory intuition cannot be the cause of an act of intellectual intuition as well, given that this latter act too pertains to the intellectual part of the human soul. Chatton's final conclusion is that we cannot indicate any proper cause of intellectual intuition.³⁸

³⁶ See *Lect.* I, d. 3, q. 6, a. 1, ed. Wey-Etzkorn, 218-220, n. 14ff. See also *Rep.*, I, d. 3, q. 5, ed. Wey-Etzkorn, 294-295, n. 21: "Item. Illa visio aut causaretur a sensatione, vel non. Si non, ergo non dependet a sensatione, et ita caecus posset habere naturaliter illam intuitivam intellectionem de coloribus, quod falsum est. [...] Si dependet et causatur a sensatione, ita dicam quod sensatio sufficit ad immediate causandum assensum tali contingenti veritati." Incidentally, this argument gives rise to what we called the Sensory/Intellectual Distinction Argument: pointing to distinct bodily modifications is the only empirical way we have to distinguish sensory intuition from intellectual intuition; but this would not be possible if intellectual intuition were somehow caused by sensory intuition and no bodily modification proper to intellectual intuition could be established.

³⁷ See, e.g., *Ord.* I, prol., q. 1, *OTh* I, 22, 4-6; 70, 21ff.; I, d. 3, q. 6, *OTh* II, 494, 19-22; *Quod.* I, q. 15, *OTh* IX, 86, 68-72.

³⁸ See *Lect.* I, d. 3, q. 6, a. 1, ed. Wey-Etzkorn, 219, n. 18; also *Rep.*, prol., q. 2, a. 4, ed. Wey, 110-111, 163-175.

Chatton's criticism looks compelling. He touches upon a point of Ockham's theory that appears weak indeed; it concerns the possibility of giving some empirical evidence for distinguishing intellective intuition from sensitive intuition. For Chatton, we cannot: first, acts of intellective intuition cannot be empirically ascertained, and second, no proper cause can be established. For these reasons, we cannot even suppose their existence by invoking the Order Condition, because all intellective acts, being that they occur with no modification of sense organs, are acts of the abstractive-kind. Regardless of how one is disposed to evaluate Chatton's arguments, one should note the importance acquired by the notion of *experience* in fourteenth-century epistemological debates. On the other hand, however, as we shall see later, Chatton's arguments are not free from difficulties.

When disputing his *Quodlibet* I, q. 13 and q. 15, probably in 1322, Ockham reacts to Chatton's criticism as formulated in the *Reportatio* and reaffirms the view that, regardless of whether the sensory soul and the intellective soul coincide, sensory intuition is not sufficient to cause an act of evident assent to an existential judgment.³⁹ But how could one empirically ascertain the existence of acts of intellective intuition? Ockham is very concise here. He says that the difference between the two types of intuition can be proven partly by reason and partly by experience. First, by experience: newborn babies have sensory intuition but not yet intellective intuition; second, by reason: disembodied souls have intellective intuition but no longer sensory intuition.⁴⁰

Can we consider Ockham's response in the *Quodlibet* a way out of Chatton's criticism? In *Lectura* I, d. 3, q. 6, a. 1, Chatton thinks not. He continues to underscore the many drawbacks of Ockham's doctrine of intellective intuition. The case of newborn babies is not decisive because the emergence of intellective intuition cannot be empirically ascertained yet; moreover, sensory intuition could be insufficient to generate an evident assent simply because newborn babies have not yet fully developed their faculty of judgment. In general, we cannot say that intellective intuition is more or equally clear than sensory intuition, for otherwise we could cognize the thing we are

³⁹ See *Quod.* I, q. 15, *OTh* IX, 83-84, 17-31.

⁴⁰ See *Quod.* I, q. 15, *OTh* IX, 84-85, 37-41.

intuiting without sensing it and yet with certitude (Clarity Argument).⁴¹ Chatton also refuses to consider supernatural cases or conditions (such as that of disembodied souls) as relevant for assessing the nature of intuition. As Ockham himself recognizes, it is not possible to have intellective intuition without having sensory intuition in the natural course of events. Chatton takes the restriction to the actual natural world as significant to prove that intellective intuition is redundant and hence reducible to sensory intuition. In the *Lectura* Chatton thus reaffirms his conclusion of the *Reportatio*: no intellective intuition is possible for human beings in this life.⁴²

2.2. Chatton's Second Criticism: Intellective Intuition Cannot be Distinguished from Species Cognition

The Experience Argument and the Causality Argument are formulated to prove that it is impossible to ascertain empirically the existence of acts of intellective intuition, and the Unicity of Subject Argument to prove that sensation is sufficient for the intellect to have cognition of extramental singulars and give evident assent to existential judgments. The principle of parsimony seems to inspire Chatton's arguments and the appeal to *experience* is the key for denying the existence of intellective intuition. This kind of cognition cannot be empirically ascertained and no proper cause of it can be established.

Chatton also formulates a second critique. It concerns the relation (b) mentioned above, namely the relation between the intellective intuition of a thing and the species

⁴¹ See *Lect.* I, d. 3, q. 6, a. 1, ed. Wey-Etzkorn, 217-220, 13-21. See also *Rep.*, prol., q. 2, a. 4, ed. Wey, 508-509; d. 3, q. 5, a. 1, ed. Wey-Etzkorn, 294-295, nn. 19-22.

⁴² See *Lect.* I, d. 3, q. 6, a. 1, ed. Wey-Etzkorn, 223, n. 31: "Prima conclusio est quod respectu sensibilis extra nulla est intellectio intuitiva in via, quia hoc aut concluderetur propter certitudinem aliquam maiorem habendas, aut propter nobilitatem intellectus, aut propter accidentalitatem obiecti, aut propter ordinem actuum cognoscendi in nobis; sed nullum istorum concludit, quia omnia salvantur per hoc quod sensationes immediate recipiuntur in anima illa quae est eadem realiter cum anima intellectiva."; 224, n. 34. For further arguments against the distinction between the two types of intuitions, see also *Rep.* I, d. 3, q. 5, a. 1, ed. Wey-Etzkorn, 294, n. 18ff.

cognition of it. This second criticism develops along the same lines as the first. After proving that it is not possible to set intellective intuition apart from sensory intuition, Chatton also proves that it is not possible to distinguish intellective intuition from species cognition. This second critique too recurs in *Lectura* I, d. 3, q. 6, a. 1, in the context of the second conclusion of the article, namely that affirming that one cannot have any intellective cognition of the extramental singular before having an abstractive act of composition and division of universal concepts. Chatton's argument develops in two steps. First, he proves that it is not possible to have an act of intellective intuition of a thing without having at the same time an act of specific cognition of that thing. Second, he proves that one can obtain the singular cognition of an extramental singular simply by making sensory intuition and species cognition interact with each other.

The first step of the argument recurs in the first part of the second principal conclusion of the article. Chatton agrees with Ockham that no abstractive cognition can be proper to a singular thing. He raises however a question: how can one experience having an abstractive cognition of a singular before an act of composition and division? He answers that two cases can be given. Either I know that my act of cognition causally depends on the singular that is present in front of me, or I know that I have an act of cognition through which I can recognize that singular, namely identify it as a singular of a certain species and distinguish it from other singulars belonging to the same species. Not the first, because abstractive cognition does not depend on the presence of a thing. But neither the second, because I experience that I have no act before composition and division except for an intuitive act. But this intuitive act is incapable of allowing me to distinguish one singular from other singulars that are maximally similar to it.⁴³

⁴³ Cf. *Lect.* I, d. 3, q. 6, a. 1, ed. Wey-Etzkorn, 220-221, n. 22: "unde innotescit tibi quod tu habes propriam cognitionem alicuius singularis ante compositionem et divisionem? Aut quia experiris illum actum naturaliter dependere a praesentia illius singularis, aut quia experiris habere actum virtute cuius non solum potuis deliberare de condicionibus specificis, sed etiam virtute cuius contingit deliberare de propriis condicionibus illius individui, distinguendo ipsum a quolibet alio individuo eiusdem rationis. Non primum, quia per te cognitio abstractiva non dependet naturaliter a praesentia rei. Non secundum, quia nullum actum experimur ante compositionem et divisionem praeter intuitivam, virtute cuius contingeret distinguere ipsum a quolibet alio individuo simillimo sibi; et per consequens talis actus non habetur."

Chatton's discussion here is about a slightly different issue, that is, the possibility of calling an abstractive cognition "proper to a singular thing". But the point that should attract our attention is Chatton's claim that no act of intuitive cognition is able to make me recognize one singular. Chatton reinforces this claim with the example of a thing seen from afar. Every time I see, for example, a man, say Socrates, moving on the peak of a hill, I proceed in cognizing from the more universal to the less universal. Sensations and intellections change over time. I first sense and intellect Socrates generically as a being and a thing, but as he gets closer to me, I know that he is a body, that he is an animal and so on until I know that he is a man and that he is this man I have in front of me.⁴⁴ As has been seen, Ockham used this example in his quodlibetal question to prove that the abstractive cognition of species cannot be proposed as the proper cognition of a singular thing. The same example is used by Chatton to prove that neither intuition could be. This example suggests that the first concept derived from a singular is not proper to that singular, but is universal and common to that singular and to all the singulars that are first generically and then specifically similar to it.

Here Chatton appears a little less accurate. Ockham could reply indeed that intellectual intuition is working (although imperfectly) even when I see from afar a thing moving on the peak of a hill, since then I not only know that there is a thing, but also that there is *that* thing I am seeing there. This reply however could not neutralize Chatton's point. The idea behind Chatton's argument is that for something to be a genuine concept, it must be predicable of a plurality of things. Since an act of intellectual intuition does not have this property, it cannot be considered a genuine concept. By itself, in fact, it is unable to permit a correct recognition of a singular. Consider again the cognition I have of this tree in front of me. How can I be certain that my cognition is the cognition of this tree and not of any other tree that is maximally similar to it? Chatton uses the example of *simillima* precisely to prove that the acts of intellectual intuition, if any, must be taken (i) either to be representative in character or (ii) to work together with concepts that are representative in character. (i) If by an act of intellectual intuition I were certain that I am cognizing this tree, I could be in one of these two situations. (i.i) Either I know that my act of cognition is precisely of *this* tree

⁴⁴ See e.g. *Rep.* I, d. 3, q. 5, a. 3, ed. Wey-Etzkorn, 302, n. 55.

and not of any other singular tree that is maximally similar to it. Or (i.ii) I know that my act of cognition is caused by this tree but I cannot know if it could be caused by another maximally similar tree. Both situations entail that my act of intuition, although for different reasons, is representative in character.⁴⁵ If instead (ii) one stated that my act of intellectual intuition is not representative in character and consequently that it is fixed only through a causal relation, by itself my act of intuition would be epistemically useless, given that I could not discriminate to which singular tree my act is connected by means of it. This case implies that my act of intellectual intuition needs to work in conjunction with some universal concept, for otherwise I could not know that I am cognizing precisely *this tree*. In other words, in order to grasp *this tree* I also need to know that this is a *tree*. Chatton sees this as a proof that abstractive cognition is epistemically necessary and, in some way, more fundamental than intellectual intuition, if any.⁴⁶

Suppose that I am convinced by Chatton's argument and so give up intellectual intuition; I still have to explain how the intellectual cognition of a singular can happen at all. Chatton gives an answer to this final question in the *Lectura*, I, d. 3, q. 6, a. 2. His position is simple: in the end, intellectual intuition has been introduced only to link our intellect to an extramental singular; if so, then it suffices for sensory intuition to carry

⁴⁵ For a large discussion of the case of *simillima* see *Rep.* I, d. 3, q. 5.

⁴⁶ Cf. *Lect.* I, d. 3, q. 6, a. 1, ed. Wey-Etzkorn, 221, n. 23: "Confirmo, quia si tu concedis te habere actum proprium istius singularis, ex hoc quod tu experiris te habere actum qui solum convenit sibi, igitur habes talem experientiam virtute cuius es certus quod tu habes istum actum, et etiam quod iste actus solum est respectu istius individui et non alterius; sed hoc non potes nisi scias distinguere inter hoc individuum et quodlibet aliud, etiam simillimum; sed talem non habemus; igitur etc.; ita quod ista sunt opposita quod experiaris te habere cognitionem propriam isti singulari, et tamen quod non poteris distinguere ipsum a quolibet alio singulari"; a. 2, 227, n. 47: "Contra. Quando ponis singulare cognosci distincte ab intellectu sine cognitione universalis: aut intelligis quod in intellectu sit distincta cognitio singularis, et tamen [quod] ipsa non est cognitio alicuius conceptus praedicabilis de pluribus. Si isto modo, nihil ad propositum, quia nullus ponit quod intellectio in mente sit pars realis albedinis extra, et ideo albedo potest cognosci non habendo cognitionem conceptus in mente. Aut intelligit quod intelligitur singulare illud distincte, et tamen virtute eius non contingit de ipso scire omnia superiora; sic est impossibile, quia si distincte intelligitur, igitur habetur talis cognitio eius virtute cuius scitur cuius naturae specificae sit, et per consequens cuius generis propinqui, et sic de omnibus superioribus."

out this task. Chatton thus returns to the cognitive scheme adopted by Scotus and Aquinas: the intellective cognition of the extramental singular results from species cognition plus sensation, nothing more. This is the second step Chatton makes in his argument. Every intellective cognition of a singular necessarily presupposes the cognition of some of the universal concepts under which the singular falls. These universal concepts are formed by abstraction from the sensations we received from the extramental singular and Chatton assumes that they serve a ‘regulative’ function with respect to the sensations that generated them.⁴⁷

In order to make clearer this second step of Chatton’s argument, let us look at what Chatton said in *Reportatio* I, d. 3, q. 5, a. 2, a place where Chatton added some important details to this picture. Among the others, Chatton there specifies that Ockham’s sentence “the first cognition of a thing is the singular one” is true if it is understood to mean that our natural knowledge ultimately begins from and ends with an extramental singular. But it is false if it is understood to mean that we naturally have a cognition that is proper to this singular and not to all the singulars that are maximally similar to it. Since no sensory intuition can cause an intellective intuition, the singular cognition of a singular thing necessarily follows and does not precede the abstractive cognition of it. Specifically, our intellect returns to the singular, from the universal concepts, in the way indicated by Aquinas, i.e., through reflecting on the sensory process.⁴⁸

Chatton also explains that, more precisely, the cognition of a singular is the result of the combination of the concept of the species with the *demonstrative concept* of that singular. We shall linger on the nature of this latter kind of concept later, but for the time being we may say that demonstrative concepts somehow clarify that ‘regulative’ function served by our intellect with respect to sensations which we mentioned above. What is the process that leads me to think of the tree that is in front of me that it is *this tree*? Demonstrative concepts play a role here. Such concepts in some way unify the sensations flowing from the tree and, in doing that, make possible to link universal

⁴⁷ Cf. *Lect.* I, d. 3, q. 6, a. 2, ed. Wey-Etzkorn, 232-233, nn. 68-69.

⁴⁸ See also *Rep.* I, d. 3, q. 5, a. 2, ed. Wey-Etzkorn, 305, n. 62ff.

concepts such as that of “tree” to that singular tree. The concept of ‘this whiteness’ well illustrates what, for Chatton, I am thinking about when I speak of intellectual cognition of a singular: ‘this’ expresses the demonstrative concept that refers to the singular whiteness from which I am receiving sensations and ‘white’ the species cognition of that thing.⁴⁹ Unlike genus and species concepts, demonstrative concepts are free-content concepts. They apparently serve but a referential function; being non-representative in character, they can properly work only in conjunction with universal concepts. One may therefore condense Chatton’s point to this claim: the cognition of a singular is not a simple but a complex cognition, being that it is the outcome of the composition of a demonstrative concept with a universal concept. This implies that we do not first know a singular *qua* singular, as affirmed by Ockham, but a singular *qua* member of a given species and genus.

In *Reportatio*, I, d. 3, q. 4, a. 1, Chatton adds another detail that can be noted. He clarifies his position on the first thing known by the intellect by rejecting the distinction, very popular in his times, between things that move the intellect to an act of cognition and things that terminate an act of cognition. The object of the intellect cannot be either the mover of an act or its terminus, for when I think of non-existing things, I am performing an act of thinking but there is nothing – moving or terminating – in the extramental world that corresponds to my act. Chatton calls this distinction a metaphorical way of speaking.⁵⁰ Terminating an act simply amounts to having an

⁴⁹ Cf. *Rep.* I, d. 3, q. 5, a. 2, ed. Wey-Etzkorn, 298-299, nn. 34-36, esp. 298, n. 34: “intellectus potest habere cognitionem propriam singularis, sed non ante compositionem et divisionem, et sic subordinatur, non quod talem actum habeat intellectus qualem sensus, sed per modum sibi debitum”; 308, n. 79: “Ad aliud, concedo quod cognitio propria singularis esset perfectior quam specifica, si haberetur, sed nulla sensitio potest talem causare, et non habentur intellectiones nisi secundum proportionem sensationum, ut dictum est, ante compositionem et divisionem; sed post, mediante complexa notitia [composita] ex conceptu communi et conceptu demonstrativo, ut cum dico ‘haec albedo’, habeo vel possum habere notitiam propriam aliquo modo singularis etiam simplicem.” See also *Lect.* I, d. 3, q. 7, a. 1, ed. Wey-Etzkorn, 242-243, n. 22. Here we can leave aside the problem of whether the first thing known by the intellect is the accident or the substance. What matters is that, for Chatton, the proper intellectual cognition of an extramental singular is the cognition of its species, be it obtained directly from the thing or through the mediation of the intellectual cognition of the accidents.

⁵⁰ Cf. *Rep.* I, d. 3, q. 4, a. 1, ed. Wey-Etzkorn, 280-281, nn. 5, 9, 13.

intellective form in the mind by which I can cognize the things ultimately referred to by such a form, in particular or in general, distinctly or confusedly.⁵¹ Metaphysically, intellection is a form in the mind by virtue of which I know that what I am sensing exists, or is of a certain kind, or exists in a certain way. Chatton does not elaborate on the nature of such intellective forms. What matters to him is simply establishing that this mental form (the form of whiteness in the mind, for example) is, by nature, indifferent to extramental singulars, and that the intellect's proper object is nothing other than the generic or specific form (the whiteness, in our example) to which this mental form primarily refers.

This description of what a concept is makes clear that something *x* can be said to be cognized in two senses. The first is that *x* is that by virtue of which we can know that a thing exists, or what its nature is, or how it is. In this sense, the first thing cognized is an intellective form that expresses a specific or generic (substantial or accidental) concept. The second sense is that *x* is what is cognized through an intellective form. In this sense, the first thing cognized is the extramental singular, as correctly suggested by Ockham.⁵² Chatton's point is that an intellective form refers to an extramental singular (i) through a demonstrative concept and (ii) through the sensations that can be associated to that concept and that are caused by that singular.⁵³

With Chatton the concept of the species returns at the center of the intellective process. It is the most appropriate for our intellect, at least in the natural course of events.⁵⁴ In fact, the intellective process mirrors the sensory one, so it is sensations that determine the nature of concepts. If we receive confused sensations first, we have confused intellections first; and if we receive distinct sensations first, we have distinct intellections first. Normally, the direction of fit in the process of acquisition of

⁵¹ Cf. *Rep.* I, d. 3, q. 4, a. 1, ed. Wey-Etzkorn, 281, n. 11: "Dico quod rem concipi vel esse conceptam nihil aliud est nisi conceptionem esse in mente, sicut nec rem intelligi vel cognitam esse nihil aliud est nisi cognitionem esse in mente"; also *Lect.* I, d. 3, q. 5, a. 1, ed. Wey-Etzkorn, 202-203, nn. 11-13.

⁵² Cf. *Rep.* I, d. 3, q. 2, a. 2, ed. Wey-Etzkorn, 242-244, nn. 52-56.

⁵³ Cf. *Rep.* I, d. 3, q. 5, a. 1, ed. Wey-Etzkorn, 305-306, nn. 61-66; also 318-320, nn. 118-124.

⁵⁴ See *Lect.* I, d. 3, q. 5, a. 1, ed. Wey-Etzkorn, 204-205, nn. 17, 19, 21-23.

knowledge is from the confused to the distinct.⁵⁵ Each sensation causes an intellection that is perfect with respect to the sensation that caused it, for “sensation primarily causes the most perfect concept it can”,⁵⁶ but imperfect with respect to the final intellectual cognition we can obtain of that thing. The closer the thing gets to us, the more perfect the sensations, and the more we attain the perfect specific intellection of that thing, as the example of a thing seen from afar shows.

3. Some Theoretical Implications of the Dispute between Ockham and Chatton

The examination of the questions of the *Lectura* and the *Reportatio* devoted to the first thing known by the intellect has shown that Chatton makes a reductionist claim: intellectual intuition can be eliminated because the cognition of a singular can be smoothly explained in terms of the interaction between the species cognition and the sensory intuition of that singular, with the mediation of a demonstrative concept. In the light of this claim, one might wonder if Chatton renounces any form of externalism in cognition. I think one should qualify the response, since the principle of causality and intuition continue to play a role also in Chatton’s theory of knowledge.

It is, however, true that Chatton’s externalism appears moderate compared to Ockham’s. For Chatton denies that the extramental singulars can directly act upon our

⁵⁵ Cf. *Rep.* I, d. 3, q. 5, a. 1, ed. Wey-Etz Korn, 300, n. 41: “sicut in sensitiva prius est sensatio indeterminatio et postea distinctio, ita in parte intellectiva primo est intellectio minus distincta et postea determinatio.”; a. 2, 306, n. 66: “Patet ergo quid sit dicendum ad istum articulum. Quia conceptus proprius individui non habetur, ex primo articulo, sequitur quod conceptus specificus illius, cuius individuum fortius movet sensum, primo habetur primitate generationis, et ex hoc [est] propositum.”; 307, n. 73; 308, n. 80.

⁵⁶ Cf. *Rep.* I, d. 3, q. 5, a. 2, ed. Wey-Etz Korn, 300, n. 42: “Quod ille conceptus primo causatur in intellectu cuius individuum fortius movet sensum primitate generationis et originis, probo: quia causa naturalis primo causat perfectissimum effectum in quem potest; conceptus specificus est perfectissimus, prater conceptum proprium individui in quem non potest; ergo primo causat specificum conceptum etc.”; 302, n. 55; 304, n. 60; 306-307, nn. 66-75; also *Lect.* I, d. 3, q. 7, a. 1, ed. Wey-Etz Korn, 236-237, n. 3; 239-242, nn. 13-19, esp. 241, n. 18.

intellect and generate acts of intellectual intuition. Our intellectual access to the extramental world is always mediated by sensation. In particular, we have seen that Chatton holds that saying that an extramental thing moves our intellect is a metaphorical way of speaking. We simply means that an extramental thing, through its species, makes possible an act of abstraction in the intellect that gives rise to an intellectual form.⁵⁷ We cognize the extramental thing through this form. This is true to the point that Chatton thinks that we can explain the intellectual cognition of existent things and that of non-existing things in formally the same way. What differentiates the two cases is that in the first case our intellectual form can be related through sensation to external things, while in the second case it cannot.

In *Lectura*, I, d. 3, q. 6, a. 2, one can see that Chatton himself mitigates some externalist consequences of his theory of knowledge. Chatton realizes that his explanation of the intellectual cognition of a singular involves an ‘externalist’ notion such as that of ‘demonstrative concept’. These concepts are introduced to explain how we can intellectually link a specific concept to a singular thing, but someone could counter that such concepts play exactly the same role as intellectual intuition for Ockham, since they appear to be caused directly by the extramental singulars before any abstractive act of composition and division has occurred.⁵⁸

Chatton states this is not the case. His response is worthy of attention. One might think that demonstrative concepts only play a referential function, as has been said above. Claude Panaccio call these concepts in Ockham ‘rigid deictics’ because, in his interpretation, Ockham assumes that “they refer to their objects without the help of any form of description, of any general concept, or of any intermediary whatsoever.”⁵⁹ Chatton offers an account of demonstrative concepts that is diametrically opposed to this. For him, demonstrative concepts come after and not before the intellect’s operation

⁵⁷ Cf. *Lect.* I, d. 3, q. 5, a. 1, ed. Wey-Etzkorn, 206, nn. 26-27; also a. 2, 208, n. 36, and *Rep.* I, d. 3, q. 4, a. 4, ed. Wey-Etzkorn, 286, n. 30-31; 287-288, n. 36.

⁵⁸ Cf. *Lect.* I, d. 3, q. 6, a. 2, ed. Wey-Etzkorn, 233, n. 70: “Dubium est de conceptu demonstrativo, quia statim cum video rem, ante omnem compositionem possum demonstrare per intellectum dicendo ‘hoc’; igitur habeo conceptum proprium simplicem ante compositionem.”

⁵⁹ Panaccio, *Ockham on Concepts*, 14.

of composition and division of concepts. In spite of appearances, they are not directly caused by extramental singulars. The intellect can form demonstrative concepts every time it reflects over the sensory process. Specifically, such concepts originate as the result of some definite description that the intellect associates to them. Thus, demonstrative concepts are complex concepts. Every time I think of a singular through a demonstrative concept, I am actually combining concepts in my intellect in such a way that the cognition of the singular ensues by implication. For example, when I am thinking of “this” thing (pointing to a white thing), I am actually thinking of something like “this (white thing) which is now seen by me through this act of vision.” This example shows that, for Chatton, demonstrative concepts require acts of sensory intuition and some universal concept for being formed and in order to function. Their distinguishing feature is that of being determined with respect to a given time (‘now’) and to a given act of sensation (‘through this act of vision’); when a demonstrative concept is temporally and referentially determined, it refers only to the extramental singular by which the act of sensation is caused. If I moved to another singular or if a maximally similar singular replaced it, a different demonstrative concept would likely be involved.⁶⁰

⁶⁰ Cf. *Lect.* I, d. 3, q. 6, a. 2, ed. Wey-Etzkorn, 221, n. 24: “visione sensitiva posita, magis sum certus per illum actum me videre unum singulare quam aliud, quia experior illam visionem magis dependere ab uno quam a reliquo, quantumcumque essent duo simillima simul existentia.”; 233, nn. 71-72: “Dico quod non ante omnem compositionem implicitam vel explicitam, vel quae aliquando praecesserit et manet virtualiter, quia numquam demonstro nisi implicando hoc quod video seu hoc quod est in tali situ; et hoc est componere, saltem implicite. Ideo dico secundo, quod potest haberi conceptus proprius singulari mediante compositione et divisione, quia contingit habere descriptionem sibi soli convenientem, ut cum dico ‘hoc quod modo videtur a me’.”; also 226, n. 43: “Et cum quaeritur a quo causatur cognitio propria singulari? – Dicendum quod causatur mediante compositione vel reflexione intellectus supra sensum, formando conceptum demonstrativum sic ‘hoc quod ego video per sensum’.”; 236, n. 79: “Patet igitur simul ad istum articulum et ad rationem opinionis, quod sicut intellectus designat certum singulare per istam propositionem ‘hoc videtur a me in *a* instanti per *b* visionem’, ita quod haec propositio non potest verificari pro alio singulari etiam simillimo, ita intellectus designat certum singulare per istum conceptum complexum cum dicit ‘hoc quod videtur a me hac visione in hoc instanti’, ita etiam designat implicite ipsum solum per conceptum simplicem proprium causatum mediante isto conceptu complexo.” See also *Rep.* I, d. 3, q. 5, a. 4, ed. Wey-Etzkorn, 318, nn. 118-119.

In *Lectura* I, d. 3, q. 6, a. 2, Chatton notes that someone could express doubts about the existence of concepts that are proper to a singular thing and are not predicable of other singular things. He remembers that given a singular thing it is always possible to give a second singular thing which is maximally similar to the first and hence indistinguishable from it. This entails that every concept that refers to one singular thing, *qua* concept, can refer to other singular things as well. Chatton is in general sympathetic with this idea; nonetheless, he considers the case of *simillima* unhelpful for describing what ordinarily happens in the process of natural knowledge. If we did not admit concepts proper to the singular thing we are sensing, we could not make sense of some empirical facts. First, that we can intellectually distinguish, as we can sensorily, a singular thing from another (also maximally similar to it). We do this when we, for example, think of Socrates and not of Plato, or of this white thing and not of that white thing. Second, that we can distinguish the concept of Socrates *qua* Socrates from the concept of Socrates *qua* a member of the human species. We obtain the former every time we give a more definite description of Socrates, by combining the specific concept of Socrates with what Scotus called the individual difference, namely the collection of the formal properties that can be attributed to Socrates and to him only. Third, that we usually form demonstrative concepts. Every time we combine a demonstrative pronoun with a common noun in our language, we in fact express a cognition that is proper to the thing to which the demonstrative pronoun refers and to it only.⁶¹ Finally, as noted in a different place from the *Lectura*, that when we enter into contact with the same singular for a second time, we do not recall to mind the entire process of composition that led to the cognition of that singular the first time. Nor is a great lapse of time necessary to recognize that singular every time.⁶² Chatton however makes it clear that this kind of

⁶¹ Cf. *Lect.* I, d. 3, q. 1, a. 3, ed. Wey-Etzkorn, 67-68, nn. 225-228. The existence of individual differences is discussed and defended by Chatton in *Lect.* I, d. 2, q. 5, a. 2, ed. Wey-Etzkorn, 372 ff. Chatton seems to think that the singular cognition of a singular obtained through a demonstrative combined with a specific noun is different from the cognition obtained through a proper name. Their descriptions include different properties and that of the latter is richer than that of the former.

⁶² See *Lect.* I, d. 3, q. 6, a. 2, ed. Wey-Etzkorn, 233, nn. 73-74; d. 8, q. 1, a. 3, ad dub. 5, ed. J. C. Wey – G. J. Etzkorn (Toronto, 2009), 30-31, nn. 127-128; also *Rep.* II, d. 3, q. unica, ed. Wey-Etzkorn, 192, n. 93; and *Rep.* I, d. 3, q. 5, a. 2, ed. Wey-Etzkorn, 307, n. 75.

singular concept, however, is not simple but complex, as said, and does not precede but follows our mind's abstractive activity of composition and division of concepts.

Conclusion

What conclusions can we draw from our examination of Chatton's arguments? I think there are many reasons for considering Chatton's criticism of Ockham's theory of knowledge interesting. One is that Chatton brings to light a couple of real difficulties surrounding Ockham's notion of intellectual intuition. The principle of parsimony is what inspires his criticism. True, Chatton perhaps does not give an incontrovertible argument for proving the *sufficiency* of sensory intuition for intellectual cognition. But his criticism underscores the difficulty Ockham has in turn for proving the *necessity* of intellectual intuition. For Ockham, intellectual intuition is necessary, first because the sensitive soul and the intellectual soul cognize the same object and under the same aspect, and, second, because the entire intellectual process, from the beginning to the end, must develop in the intellectual part of the human soul. Chatton counters that it is sufficient to posit that one and the same is the subject of both sensations and intellections for preserving the continuity of the process from sensation to intellection. Saying this does not mean that we only have intellections and not sensations, or that our intellect can also perform acts of sensation, but simply that the ultimate subject of any cognitive process, sensory and intellectual, is one and the same. Otherwise, we could not be intellectually aware of what we are sensing. This is not a metaphysically innocuous claim and may appear no less questionable than Ockham's metaphysical assumption that the object of sensation and intellection must be the same. But Chatton's criticism remains effective: one may preserve the continuity of the process simply assuming that one and the same subject-cognizer is the receiver of all relevant cognitions.

Nevertheless, Chatton recognizes that in the human being there are different souls and that the sensory soul works in conjunction with sense organs, while the intellectual soul works in separation from them. But they bring about a human soul that is one in number since the processes they give rise to, i.e., sensation and intellection, are

essentially ordered processes, the former to the latter. The coordination of the functions of the different souls suffices to infer the numerical unity of the human soul; for this reason, sensation is enough for the intellect to have cognition of an extramental singular.

Ockham thought of acts of intellectual intuition as something like rigid deictics, as Claude Panaccio called them. Simply, they refer to the things that directly caused them and to them only. They are content-free, probably non-representative in character, whose existence is required to trigger the intellectual process. Chatton replies that this interpretation makes acts of intellectual intuitions mysterious, since we can never ascertain them or establish their proper cause. On Ockham's understanding, they merely serve the function of binding the intellect to a given extramental singular. But such a connection to the extramental world is already possible through sensation. How can we prove the existence of acts of intellectual intuition if these acts cannot remain once the acts of sensory intuition accompanying them have been over? This doubt leads Chatton to an alternative and ontologically simpler account of intuition.

When we grasp *this* whiteness, for example, we simultaneously recognize it as a *whiteness*. Sensation is sufficient to grasp a singular whiteness, say the whiteness of this wall, but in order to grasp it as a *thing* of a certain kind (i.e., as a whiteness and a color), we need intellectual acts that compose and divide specific and generic concepts. While to grasp it as *this* thing we need a certain definite description that mediates the formation of a demonstrative concept and permits binding our universal concepts to the singular thing that has been sensed. Ockham too admits that the cognition of the species of a thing is formed simultaneously with the intellectual intuition of it, and this suggests that for Ockham too an act of intellectual intuition can never work in separation of an act of abstractive cognition. If so, Chatton insists, an act of specific cognition is sufficient to recognize a thing as a thing of a certain species, and an act of sensation, associated in the intellect to a demonstrative concept, is sufficient to make possible the reference of such an act to a singular thing of the external world in particular. Postulating acts of intellectual intuition is therefore unnecessary.

However, there is at least one point of difficulty in Chatton's explanation as well. As we have seen, Chatton speaks of demonstrative concepts. On occasion he says that

we may infer their existence from the fact that we are accustomed to use propositions and expository syllogisms involving them.⁶³ But Chatton does not explain what kind of cognition the demonstrative concept of a thing exactly expresses. The origin of these concepts remains uncertain, as well as their function when they are used in combination with specific concepts. No decisive argument is given for proving that they are posterior to specific and generic concepts and that they have a conceptual content which is expressed by a definite description. The process of temporally and referentially determining demonstrative concepts remains substantially unexplained. In a definite description of a demonstrative concept, in fact, another demonstrative seems to occur, since we cannot define what 'this' means if not by reference to 'this act of sensation'. This is a difficult but sensitive point, which would call for a more detailed investigation.

⁶³ See e.g. *Lect.* I, d. 3, q. 6, a. 2, ed. Wey-Etzkorn, vol. 2, 231, n. 60; also *Rep.* I, d. 3, q. 5, a. 4, ed. Wey-Etzkorn, vol. 1, 318-319, n. 120.